

# The Family of God



1 Timothy 3 : 15

## Family is central in God's plan

- God would address the problem of sin through a family which He promised to Abraham and which was to include all nations
- The nation of Israel was God's "son" or family
- Israel was meant to attract and welcome other nations into God's family, but failed
- Jesus, the son of God, was the true Israel or family of God
- We are saved / redeemed / atoned for and adopted as children into God's family by taking up the life of Christ



## Genesis 17 : 1-5

- God's plan from the beginning – He would fix the problem of sin through one seed or family
- This family would come from Abraham's descendents and consist of people from all nations

## Mark 3 : 31-35

***"... Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."***

- Jesus redefined the family of God
- Being descendents of Abraham would no longer guarantee status as God's children



## **Luke 14 : 25-27**

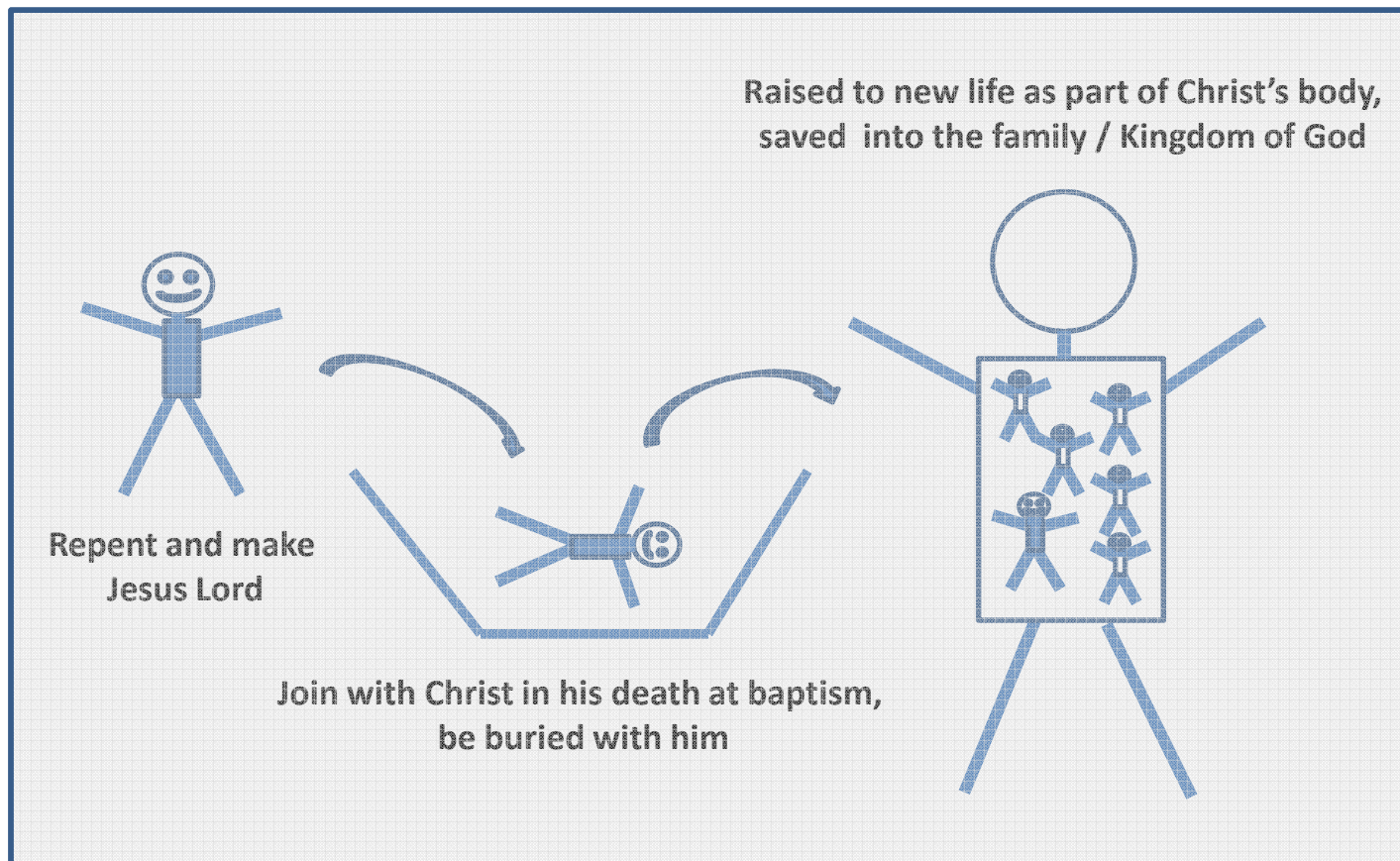
- Inheritance language – “hate” meant to reject as the main source of identity and security
- To enter God’s family we need to die to self and enter into the life of Christ – Jesus needs to be the our main source of identity and security

## **1 Corinthians 12 : 12-14 ; Ephesians 2 : 19-22**

- Entering into the life of Christ is not just an individual event – we are baptized into a community that is the body of Christ
- Being children of God brings blessings and inheritance rights, but also responsibilities to one another



# Baptism into body of Christ = God's family



## John 13 : 34-35

- Signifying mark of God's family = way we love each other with the self sacrificial love of Jesus
- Biblical love = loyalty and faithfulness



## 1 John 4 : 19-20

- The way we treat members of God's family is how we treat God
- How much you love God's family = how much you love God
- What does this say about people intent on pursuing a personal relationship with God without building relationships with members of God's family ?



## **Ephesians 4 : 2-3, 16**

- People in God's family are not perfect – we will hurt each other and let each other down
- This happens when you are close
- Natural reaction when hurt is to pull back, but in God's family we are called to “fall forward”

## **Acts 2 : 42-47**

- The first Christians behaved like family did in those days : spent lots of time together, studied the scriptures together, prayed together and ate together
- They also shared resources to support and expand God's Kingdom
- Does this describe your church ? Are you willing to live like this ?



# For further study

## Hebrews 10 : 23-25

- Called to be devoted to meeting together - important for spurring each other on and encouraging one another
- Are you willing to view meetings of the body as one of your highest priorities ?

## Romans 12 : 1-5

- Part of our sacrifice and worship to God is being devoted to the body
- Members of God's family belong to one another – not a popular message in our individualistic culture
- What do you think this means ?



# For further study (cont)

## Matthew 5 : 14

*“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

- What does this mean ?
- Israel originally called to be the light of the world (Isaiah 49 : 6), Jesus then took up this calling (John 8 : 12) and he passed the baton to his disciples

## Matthew 28 : 18-20

... *“therefore go and make disciples of all nations, ...*



- The “all nations” character of God’s family is fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham
- God’s family should reflect the diversity of many nations, cultures and languages, united in Christ and living according to a different set of values



# Convictions

- **Do you believe that the body of Christ is the true family of God?**
- **Are you ready to make God's family your top priority in life in terms of your time, gifts, energy and resources?**
- **Do you readily take up the calling to be the "light of the world", living a life of sacrificial love and attracting other people into God's family?**
- **Do you embrace the diversity that is an integral part of being in God's family of all nations?**



Port Elizabeth Church of Christ

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